



**TENNESSEE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
CENTRAL OFFICE
CORNERSTONE SQUARE BUILDING, SUITE 305
530 CHURCH STREET
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0745
(615) 741-5825 FAX (615) 253-1886**

January 28, 2005 Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner's Present:

Commissioner Hammonds
Commissioner Smith
Chairman Wiggins
Commissioner Rodriguez (via Phone)
Commissioner Todd
Commissioner Jones (via Phone)
Commissioner Pride
Commissioner Edna Loveday-Rogers

Commissioner's Absent:

Commissioner Garrett
Commissioner Hodge
Commissioner Kyles
Commissioner Horne
Commissioner Walker
Commissioner Hakeem

Staff Present:

Amber D. Gooding, Executive Director
Antonio Adams, Deputy Director
Scott Mayer, General Counsel
Shay Rose, Assistant Counsel
Robert Bright, Housing Coordinator
Cynthia Howard, Communications Officer
Lisa Lancaster, Executive Director's Assistant

Guests:

Mr. Rogers

Call to Order

Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Commissioner Smith offered the invocation. Roll call was taken.

Chairman Wiggins greeted the board with wishes for a happy new year and noted that he was proud of the changes that have taken place within the agency and that 2005 looked even better.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the November 19, 2004 were reviewed and Commissioner Smith made a motion to accept, which was seconded by Commissioner Todd. A vote was taken and passed.

Announcements

Director Gooding reminded the board of the passing of Commissioner Joseph Walker's wife and noted that flowers were sent on behalf of the board. It was announced that after 9 years with the agency, Robert Bright was promoted to Housing Director in the Knoxville

Regional office. When asked to make a speech, Mr. Bright thanked the commission for the vote of confidence and vowed to continue to move the Housing division in positive direction.

Old Business

Director Gooding and Cynthia Howard, Communications Officer, gave an update of the radio and TV spots that will be airing in the very near future and thanked the commissioners who were involved in taping the spots. Commissioner Rodriguez noted that a Spanish channel 42 was interested in doing PSA's. Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Todd also will be getting information on African American and Spanish newspapers in Chattanooga and Jackson.

Employment Case Report

Deputy Director Antonio Adams reported on Employment case statistical information since the November 2004 board meeting. (Report Attached). Deputy Adams gave an overview of the Outreach activities that are in progress and noted that Investigators will be involved in additional training in the spring. Director Gooding noted that Deputy Adams is studying for the bar.

Housing Case Report

Housing Coordinator, Robert Bright reported the activity in the area of housing cases. (Report attached). He spoke about settlements received on cause cases, total inventory of cases for the agency and also cases conciliated successfully. It was also noted that on February 15th a Housing forum will be hosted by THRC in Jackson. Also forums are being planned for evenings and Saturdays at East TN State University and Chattanooga.

All housing employees have gone to NFHTA sponsored by HUD and successfully completed week one. Director Gooding gave an overview of the certification process of Investigators, Executive Director and Assistant Attorney who complete the 5 part training academy held in Washington DC.

Cause Case Report

Assistant Counsel, Shay Rose reported on the status of current housing and employment cause cases in THRC inventory. The judge is due to enter a ruling in the Benton County employment case. Director Gooding noted that an employment conference is planned for June to assist with educating employers across the state.

Director Gooding noted that it would be helpful if the board could have a map of the state noting cases in the THRC inventory by county and asked Communications officer, Cynthia Howard to prepare the visual for the next meeting.

Budget and Audit Committee Report

Director Gooding reported on the recent conference call Budget and Audit committee in the absence of the Chair, Commissioner Hakeem. (Report attached). In December agencies were told that possible budget cuts might be requested by the Governor's office. Because the sales tax figures were on the rise, the cuts were not requested. THRC operates on an annual budget of approximately 2 million dollars with a majority of that being spent on staff salaries and programs.

Other Business

Director Gooding noted that the Outreach and Education committee will need to meet to assist the preparations for the employment conference that is being planned for June 2005.

Cynthia Howard reminded the board that radio spots will begin running in February.

With no further business to attend to, Chairman Wiggins called for the board meeting to be adjourned. The meeting was closed at 10:35 am.